

BOOK REVIEWS



IN CHARGE OF
M. E. CAMERON

THE INNER SHRINE. Harper Brothers, New York.

Speculation has waxed rife over the authorship of this tale which is given to the public anonymously. Whoever the author, one cannot but be under obligation to so kind an interpreter of the younger American women of the day. One likes to think that Marion Grimstone lives across the Park, or that perhaps she has gone to France to teach the Marquis de Bienville a new code of honor. Marion Grimstone, who at the first glance displays absolutely no sign of the fine, high character which takes no count of her happiness when she finds out the complications which involve another woman's honor and display the absolutely false standards which her lover has brought along with him from his native country. Then there is the quite different type of Dorothea Pruyn—a type known long ago to Henry James, but one we had almost lost sight of in the throngs of vicious women who have been pushed before us in so much of the recent fiction. One fancies that the author is young, that she has lived in guarded environment which has enabled her to retain sweet and true ideals, although she has seen Parisian life so intimately that she understands far better than the ordinary Anglo Saxon the curious paradoxes of some of its phases. Her men, too, give one the idea of youthful authorship—Carli Wappinger is little more than a name, his best recommendation Dorothea's love for him. Reggie Bradford, fat, foolish, and incontinent, might be the chance acquaintance of a single meeting, and de Bienville has little personality. The older men she is more intimate with, and they appear from her pen very natural.

We are indebted to this unknown author for a very welcome addition to the fiction of to-day. The novel is clean and wholesome. The story holds the reader's interest and awakens his sympathy, and is altogether what one looks for in a novel—entertaining without straining after morbid effects, natural situations, and on the whole satisfactory climaxes.

THE PROBLEM OF AGE, GROWTH, AND DEATH. A Study of Cytomorphosis. By Charles S. Minot, LL.D. (Yale, Toronto), D.Sc. (Oxford). G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London. The Knickerbocker Press.

Edited by Edward Lee Thorndike, Ph.D., of Columbia University, with the co-operation of Frank Evers Beddard, F.R.S., in Great Britain, is the Science Series, of which each volume treats in a thoroughly scientific manner a different department with reference to the latest advance made in this particular branch of science. Each book is written by a specialist and the editors aim at keeping the public constantly informed of the progress of science, and also making more general the diffusion of such knowledge among general readers.

The present volume, based on lectures given at the Lowell Institute by Charles S. Minot, James Stillman, Professor of Comparative Anatomy in the Harvard Medical School, President of the Boston Society of Natural History, is a study of the problem of life, and more particularly of the end of life, old age and death.

Cytomorphosis or the changes in the cells through their formation, growth, differentiation, degeneration, and disintegration, is going on, from the moment of earliest development throughout life and into and after death. We are shown that from the beginning cells are continually dying to make room for new cells. This is called growth. With growth comes differentiation. With the completion of differentiation comes the increase of protoplasm, a sign of senescence or completion of life—the last stage in the cytomorphic cycle. There is no light thrown on the question how may we delay the inevitable end that lies before us, other than that the more haste we make to reach the zenith of life the sooner shall we find ourselves upon the downward incline, the general advice being to take from each moment of life its fullest measure, not hurrying, not delaying, until we come to death, which if we have lived with integrity we ought to enter on confidently without doubts of the unknown.

Considering the subject, the book is written with great lucidity, scientific terms all carrying their proper significance in plain and easily comprehended language. The education of the public along these lines is sure of being accomplished with such literature within reach through the public libraries, etc., and that such education is needed there can be no question. The ignorance of the average young tradesman is illustrated by H. G. Wells in his "Kipps," who having entered on a fortune of twelve hundred pounds sterling a year bethinks himself of improving his mind. A volume of Kirke's "Human Physiology" falling into his hands, he turned over the leaves until he came upon a striking plate, in which a youth of agreeable profile displayed his interior in an unstinted manner to the startled eye. It was a new view of humanity altogether for Kipps and it arrested his mind. "Chubes," he whispered,

"Chubes!" This anatomized figure made him forget for a space that he was "practically a gentleman" altogether, and he was still surveying its extraordinary complications when another reminder of a world quite outside those spheres of ordered gentility into which his dreams had carried him over night arrived in the person of "Chitterlow."

Kipps in the depths of his ignorance is surrounded by a vast company of his fellows, many of whom regard the science of their own being in exactly the same diffident agony. They are consumed with curiosity but ashamed to manifest the least interest in a subject tabooed by its mysteriousness.

THE SURGICAL TREATMENT OF THE UMBILICAL CORD.—The same journal states that this subject is considered by J. W. Ballantyne, who says that infection in the new-born through the umbilicus is more common than is realized, and he quotes one of the Berlin physicians, who says that 2 per cent. of infant mortality is referable to infection acquired as above stated. Under the author's supervision six different methods were tried on sixteen infants. The plan which he claims alone fulfils the requirements of modern antisepsis was as follows: The cord was cut off flush with the skin of the umbilicus, and the skin surfaces were joined. With a scalpel a circular incision was made at the junction of the infant's skin with the sheath of the cord. The incision was gradually deepened till the vessels were approached; then by careful dissection the vessels were cleaned from the jelly of the cord and tied separately; next the cord was severed, and finally the edges of the skin were freshened and united with silkworm gut or catgut. Ten minutes were required. No jaundice occurred in the four instances in which this plan was followed. Healing of the stumps was complete by the fourth day and the cicatrix retracted. The good results were evidently due to the removal of all the dead structures and the freshening of the cutaneous surfaces. No putrefaction whatever took place. The author anticipates and replies to certain objections which might be made against the method he commends.